

## Message Text

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ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ADP-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-09 H-02

INR-09 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-14

USIA-12 AID-20 T-03 OMB-01 EB-11 COME-00 TRSE-00

AGR-20 STR-08 IGA-02 IO-13 DPW-01 SR-02 ORM-03 EA-11

RSR-01 /198 W

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R 100748 Z MAR 73

FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3096

INFO AMEMBASSY DACCA

AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

UNCLAS SECTION 1 OF 2 NEW DELHI 2793

E. O. 11652: N/ A

TAGS: PFOR, IN, US, PK, BG, UR, XC

SUBJECT: MRS. GANDHI DISCUSSES WORLD AFFAIRS

### SUMMARY

IN EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW WITH STATESMAN'S KULDIP NAYAR, PRIME MINISTER GANDHI MADE FOLLOWING MAJOR POINTS: A) INDIA QTE TRYING TO MAKE EFFORT UNQTE TO IMPROVE RELATIONS WITH US; B) ASKED SUPPOSE AMERICA WERE TO OFFER FOODSTUFFS, SHE SAID QTE WE DO NOT NEED IT NOW. WE HAVE TROUBLE ENOUGH WITH THE MILO WE HAVE GOT FROM THERE UNQTE; C) WESTERN COUNTRIES ( APPARENTLY EXCLUDING US) HAD ASSURED HER THEY NOT APPREHENSIVE INDIA IN SOVIET CLUTCHES; D) REAFFIRMED INDIAN POSITION ON POWS AND INDO- PAK RELATIONS; AND E) REPLIED CAUTIOUSLY AND UNEXCEPTIONABLY ON SOUTHEAST ASIA. EXCERPTS ON ABOVE SUBJECTS FOLLOW WITH FULL TEXT TO DEPT BY POUCH. END SUMMARY.

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1. INDO- US RELATIONS:

Q: SUPPOSE AMERICA WERE TO OFFER FOODSTUFFS?

PM: WE DO NOT NEED IT NOW. WE HAVE TROUBLE ENOUGH WITH THE MILO WHICH WE HAVE GOT FROM THERE.

Q: ALSO THERE ARE REPORTS THAT THEY MIGHT RESUME ECONOMIC AID TO US. WOULD YOU STAND BY WHAT YOU HAD SAID MANY TIMES BEFORE THAT YOU WOULD LIKE AID FOR A PARTICULAR PROJECT AND THAT TOO IF WE NEEDED IT.

PM: NATURALLY.

Q: BUT NOT OVERALL AID?

PM: NO. WE NEED HELP IN CERTAIN SOPHISTICATED ITEMS AND SO ON AND THERE IS NO SENSE IN OUR GETTING THINGS WHICH WE CAN MAKE OURSELVES OR WE CAN DO OURSELVES HERE. THAT GOES WITH EVERYBODY. WE DO NOT HAVE A SPECIAL POLICY FOR THE USA. IT IS A GENERAL THING. IN THE BEGINNING WE WERE NOT ABLE TO DO MANY THINGS OURSELVES-- I MEAN SET UP A WHOLE PLANT OR FACTORY. NOW WE CAN. SO THERE IS NO SENSE IN DUPLICATING THAT EFFORT AND WASTING RESOURCES ON THAT SORT OF OUTSIDE THING. IT IS MORE EXPENSIVE TO GET A THING FROM OUTSIDE.

Q: IT IS BEING SAID THAT RELATIONS BETWEEN INDIA AND AMERICA ARE BEGINNING TO THAW. WHY IS THERE THIS KIND OF IMPRESSION.

PM: WELL, I THINK THAT WE ARE TRYING TO MAKE AN EFFORT. WE HAVE ALWAYS SAID THAT OUR POLICY IS TO CEMENT WHATEVER FRIENDSHIP THERE IS STRENGTHEN IT, TO CREAT FRIENDSHIP WHERE IT DOES NOT EXIST AND TO BLUNT HOSTILITY WHERE IT DOES EXIST I WONT PUT AMERICA IN THE LAST CATEGORY. I DONT THINK THERE IS HOSTILITY BUT THERE HAS BEEN MISUNDERSTANDING. THAT WAS MOSTLY ON BANGLADESH. BUT EVEN APART FROM BANGLADESH, THE PRIMARY MISUNDERSTANDING-- WELL, I DO NOT KNOW WHETHER IT IS MISUNDERSTANDING-- IS THAT THEY HAVE CONSISTENTLY SUPPORTED PAKISTAN. PAKISTAN HAS COMMITTED AGGRESSION AND MADE WAR ON US WITH EQUIPMENT AND WEAPONS GOT FROM THE USA. THIS IS THE BASIC THING REALLY.

Q: IT IS SAID THAT AMERICA IS THINKING OF RESUMING ARMS SUPPLY TO PAKISTAN, IF NOT DIRECTLY, INDIRECTLY.

PM: I HOPE NOT.

2. INDO- SOVIET RELATIONS:

Q: AN IMPRESSION HAS BEEN CREATED, ESPECIALLY IN THE WESTERN UNCLASSIFIED

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VOUNTRIES, THAT AFTER THE INDO- USSR FRIENDSHIP TREATY WE

ARE TILTING TOWARDS MOSCOW OR THAT WE ARE ALREADY IN THEIR CLUTCHES AND THINGS LIKE THAT.

PM: I DONT THINK THERE IS ANY REAL MISUNDERSTANDING I THINK IT IS A VERY DELIBERATE EFFORT OR ATTEMPT TO CREATE THIS IMAGE OF INDIA. I DONT THINK THAT ANYBODY REALLY THINKS SO. AND CERTAINLY THIS IS OUR INFORMATION FROM ALL COUNTRIES. FRST, WHEN YOU SAID ABOUT WESTERN MIND IT IS NOT IN THE WESTERN MIND AT ALL. THEY HAVE ASSURED ME THAT THEY HAVE NO SUCH FEARS OR APPREHENSIONS. IT IS ONLY ONE COUNTRY WHICH HAS TRIED. BUT EVEN THERE IF YOU TALK TO THE INTELLIGENTSIA OR ANYBODY, NOBODY DOUBTS THAT. ( COMMENT: PRESUMABLY REFERRING TO US, SINCE IT DIFFICULT TO ENVISAGE HER REFERRING TO CHINES INTELLIGENTSIA AS SEPARATE FROM GOVT. END COMMENT.)

THE TREATY IS LIKE VARIOUS OTHER TREATIES WE HAVE WITH OTHER COUNTRIES WE HAVE A SIMILAR TREATY WITH BANGLADESH AND SO ON. IT IS JUST A FRIENDSHIP TREATY. IT DOES NOT AFFECT OUR POLICY. IT HAS NOT IN THE PAST, IT IS NOT AFFECTING IT NOW AND IT WILL NOT AFFECT IT IN THE FUTURE. IT HAS NOT MADE ANY DIFFERENCE TO OUR NON- ALIGNMENT OR OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH ANY OTHER COUNTRY.

Q: BUT SO FAR AS SOVIET PLANS AND OUR PLANS CONCERNED?

PM: THAT IS PURELY AN ECONOMIC MATTER. THERE EVERYTHING COMES UNDER THE PLAN. SO IF THEY ARE GOING TO SELL US SOMETHING IN BULK, OR WE ARE GOING TO SELL THEM, THEY HAVE TO FIT IT INTO THEIR PROGRAMME. IN THE SAME WAY, WHATEVER WE GET FROM ANY COUNTRY IS FITTED INTO OUR PLAN THAT DOES NOT MEAN THAT THE PLANS ARE DOVETAILED. AND IF WE GET A LARGE AMOUNT OF EVEN FOODSTUFF-- NOT THAT WE ARE GETTING IT-- AS FOR EXAMPLE FROM THE UNITED STATES, IT HAS TO FIT IN SOMEWHERE THAT THIS IS COMING. WHEREVER THERE IS A PLANNED ECONOMY, IT HAS TO BE PUT IN " SO MUCH IS OURS, SO MUCH IS THEIRS" AND SO ON. IT HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH DOVETAILED. MOYNIHAN

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UNCLAS SECTION 2 OF 2 NEW DELHI 2793

E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, IN, US, PK, BG, UR, XC

SUBJECT: MRS. GANDHI DISCUSSES WORLD AFFAIRS

3. PRISONERS OF WAR:

Q. NOW I COME TO PAKISTAN, I SHALL TAKE UP THE PRISONERS OF WAR ISSUE. ONE, OF COURSE, IS THE IMPRESSION WHICH THE GUARDIAN CORRESPONDENT HAD GIVEN. WHAT DID YOU EXACTLY TELL HIM?

PM: WHAT I SAID WAS THAT WHATEVER DECISION WAS TAKEN ON THE POWS HAS TO BE IN CONCURRENCE WITH BANGLADESH. NOW IF SOME PEOPLE FEEL THAT WE ARE RIGID OR BANGLADESH IS RIGID IN THAT CONTEXT I FEEL THAT NO GESTURE HAD BEEN MADE EVEN FROM PAKISTAN DURING ALL THIS TIME. IF PEOPLE THINK THAT RECOGNITION IS THE WHOLE THING, AT LEAST SOME STEP HAD BEEN SHOWN, SOME GESTURE HAD BEEN MADE THEN IT WOULD MAKE THE WHOLE SITUATION. IT IS NOT FOR ME, I CAN' T SAY GOOD OR NOT BECAUSE AFTER SOME YEARS IT MIGHT HAVE MADE THE SITUATION. I CAN' T TALK ON IT- IT WOULD HAVE EASED THE UNCLASSIFIED

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SITUATION. THE SECOND POINT IS THAT PEOPLE ARE MAKING SO MUCH FUSS ABOUT PRISONERS OF WAR, BUT NOBODY IS THINKING OF THE SUFFERING OF THE BENGALIS ( IN PAKISTAN) WE SAID FOUR LAKHS AND HE QUOTED ABOUT ONE- AND- A- HALF LAKHS SO I DON' T KNOW HOW MANY THEY WERE, BUT THE VERY FACT OF IT SEEMS RATHER VERY STRANGE THAT SO MUCH STRESS SHOULD BE LAID ON THE PRISONERS OF WAR WHO ARE WELL LOOKED AFTER, WHEREAS THE CONDITION OF THE BENGALIS FROM WHAT WE HEAR IS VERY UNSATISFACTORY AND THERE IS NO REASON TO KEEP THEM. THERE ARE SOME MILITARY PEOPLE, BUT I THINK THE BULK ARE THE CIVILIANS.

Q: DON' T YOU THINK THAT ON THIS POWS ISSUE EVERYWHERE IN THE WORLD WE HAVE BEEN CONDEMNED AND DEFAMED? NOW IF IT IS LINKED WITH THE RECOGNITION OF BANGLADESH.....

PM: ( INTERRUPTING): THAT IS NOT IN OUR HANDS. IT IS NOT FOR US TO SAY, " YOU RECOGNIZE". WE ARE CONCERNED ONLY ON THE LIMITED THING THAT WHATEVER DECISIONS ARE TAKEN SHOULD BE TAKEN WITH THE CONCURRENCE OF BANGLADESH AND IF THEY MAKE A CONDITION, IT IS THAT BETWEEN THEM AND PAKISTAN.

Q: CAN' T WE TELL THEM?

PM: SAY WHAT? IT IS FOR THEM TO DECIDE WHAT IS IN THEIR NATIONAL INTEREST AND ANY COUNTRY DOES NOT LIKE ANOTHER COUNTRY ADVISING ON SUCH THINGS ESPECIALLY A COUNTRY WHICH IS SMALL AND NOW FREE.

Q: I AM TOLD THAT THEY ARE VERY SENSITIVE AS FAR AS INDIA IS CONCERNED.

PM: ALL THESE OTHER COUNTRIES WHO ARE THERE, INCLUDING THE OTHER ONES, ARE CREATING SENSITIVITY BY SAYING INDIA IS GOING TO DO THIS AND GOING TO OVERWHELM YOU. AND IT IS NOT AT ALL TRUE.

Q: DO YOU THINK SOME MOVEMENT MAY TAKE PLACE AFTER THE ELECTIONS?

A: ELECTIONS ARE OVER.

Q: WOULD YOU LIKE TO SAY SOMETHING?

PM: NATURALLY, WE ARE VERY GLAD TO DO THINGS MORE EFFECTIVELY.

Q: BUT WHY SOME ELEMENTS ARE STILL PROPAGATING AGAINST US IN BANGLADESH WHEN WE HAVE TRIED OUR BEST?

PM: NATURALLY THAT IS SOMETHING YOU CAN ANSWER BY GOING TO BANGLADESH.

Q: WOULD YOU LIKE TO COMMENT ON STATEMENT ABOUT PLEBISCITE?

PM: WE HAVE EXPRESSED OURSELVES ON NUMEROUS OCCASIONS AND I DO NOT THINK THERE IS ANYTHING NEW TO BE SAID ON THIS SUBJECT.

Q: THAT IS, AFTER ALL ELECTIONS HAVE BEEN HELD AGAIN AND AGAIN IN THE STATE AND THE PEOPLE HAVE EXPRESSED THEIR DESIRE. SO THIS UNCLASSIFIED

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MATTER IS CLOSED FOR EVER.

PM: IT IS NO USE MAKING A STATEMENT LIKE THAT. I MEAN THE STATE IS MAKING PROGRESS. IT IS TRYING TO SOLVE ITS BASIC PROBLEMS AND SO ON. I DON' T KNOW HOW IT HELPS TO RAKE UP THIS MATTER EVERY NOW AND THEM.

Q: WHAT ABOUT THE PROPOSAL OF A SOFT BORDER?

PM: NOW YOU SEE ALL THESE THINGS CAN COME IN, DEPENDING ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN INDIA AND PAKISTAN. IF THERE IS HOSTILITY, HOW CAN YOU HAVE A SOFT BORDER BETWEEN ANY PART OF INDIA AND PAKISTAN? IF THERE IS FRIENDSHIP, WELL ALL THE BORDERS CAN BE SOFT, WHY ONLY KASHMIR.

Q: BUT AFTER THE SIMLA AGREEMENT, THEY BLAME US THAT WE HAVE NOT MADE ANY MOVEMENT.

PM: ALL THE MOVEMENTS ARE OURS. WHAT MOVEMENT HAVE THEY MADE? EVERY INITIATIVE WAS OURS. AND EVEN AFTERWARDS WHEN THINGS GOT STUCK UP, I WROTE TO PRESIDENT BHUTTO SAYING, COULD WE HAVE OTHER AGREEMENTS? JUST AS WE HAVE GOT ABOUT WITHDRAWAL AND DELINEATION OF THE BORDER, WE COULD HAVE OVER- FLIGHTS.

AND VARIOUS OTHER THINGS I MENTIONED. HE SAID: NO, NO, NOTHING  
CAN BE DONE TILL THE PRISONERS OF WAR..... EARLIER ON, THEIR  
STANCE WAS THAT THERE COULD BE NO TALKS TILL KASHMIR  
WAS SETTLED. IF YOU TAKE VERY RIGID STANDS LIKE THAT, THEN IT IS VERY

DIFFICULT. BUT THE MAJOR THING WHICH HE SEEMS TO HAVE EITHER  
GONE BACK ON OR FORGOTTEN IS WHAT I TOLD HIM WHEN HE WAS HERE,  
WHICH I TOLD YOU WHEN YOU MET ME LAST- THAT WE HAVE TO DECIDE  
WHETHER WE CONSIDER THE INTERESTS OF INDIA AND PAKISTAN TO BE  
CONTRADICTORY OR COMPLEMENTARY.

Q: WERE YOU TO FIND SOME INDICATION OR GESTURE WOULD YOU CONSIDER  
SENDING AN EMISSARY?

PM: IT DEPENDS ON WHAT WE DECIDE AN EMISSARY SHOULD DO. I  
DON' T THINK YOU CAN JUST DECIDE ON SENDING A PERSON. IN  
THEIR CONSTITUTION THEY HAD MENTIONED BANGLADESH IN ANOTHER WAY.  
IT IS QUITE DIAMETRICALLY OPPOSED TO WHAT PRESIDENT BHUTTO HAD  
SAID IN SIMLA. THIS DOES NOT RECOGNIZE THE REALITIES OF THE  
CHANGED SITUATION.

Q: COULD IT BE THAT HE MIGHT BE HAVING SOME INTERNAL  
DIFFICULTIES?

PM: HE HAS LOTS OF INTERNAL DIFFICULTIES. SO HAVE I. YOU HAVE  
TO DECIDE WHAT IS IN THE LARGER INTERESTS AND WORK FOR IT.  
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